CHAPTER SEVEN—Continued.

—11—

"My God!" she exclaimed. "What a nasty liar you are!"

It was not ladylike, but at that moment the lady was temporarily absent.

"Mother, I'm glad you say that," the girl answered still very calmly, although her fingers trembled a little as she felt the violets and her voice was not quite steady. "It shows that I am not so stupid at home as I am at school."

The girl rose and threw down the violets and her mild and listless manner. A look of defiance filled her face and her figure. Mrs. Bing arose, her eyes aglow with anger.

"I'd like to know what you mean," she said under her breath.

"I mean that if I am a liar you taught me how to be it. Ever since I was knee-high you have been teaching me to deceive my father. I am not going to do it any longer. I am going to find my father and tell him the truth. I shall not wait another minute. He will give me better advice than you have given, I hope."

The words had fallen rapidly from her lips and, as the last one was spoken, she hurried out of the room. Mrs. Bing threw herself on the couch where she lay with certain bitter memories until the new maid came to tell her that it was time to dress.

She was like one reminded of mortality after coming out of ether.

"Oh, Lord," she murmured wearily. "I feel like going to bed! How can I live through that dinner? Please bring me some brandy."

Phyllis learned that her father was at his office whither she proceeded without a moment's delay. She sent in word that she must see him alone and as soon as possible. He dismissed the men with whom he had been talking and invited her into his private office.

"Well, girl, I guess I know what is on your mind," he said. "Go ahead."

Phyllis began to cry.

"All right! You do the crying and I'll do the talking," he went on. "I feel like doing the crying myself, but if you want the job, I'll resign it to you. Perhaps you can do enough of that for both of us. I began to smell a rat the other day. So I sent for Gordon King. He came this morning. I had a long talk with him. He told me the truth. Why didn't you tell me? What's the good of having a father unless you use him at times when his counsel is likely to be worth having? I would have made a good father, if I had had half a chance. I should like to have been your friend and confidant in this important enterprise. I should have been a help to you. But, somehow, I couldn't get on the board of directors. You and your mother have been running the plant all by yourselves and I guess it's pretty near bankrupt. Now, my girl, there's no use crying over spilt tears. Gordon King is not the man of my choice, but we must all take hold and try to build him up. Perhaps we can make him pay."

"I do not love him," Phyllis sobbed.

"You married him because you wanted to. You were not coerced?"

"No, sir."

"I'm sorry, but you'll have to take your share of the crow with the rest of us," he went on, with a note of sternness in his tone. "My girl, when I make a contract I live up to it and I intend that you shall do the same. You'll have to learn to love and cherish this fellow, if he makes it possible. You and your mother believe in woman's rights. I don't object to that, but you mustn't think that you have the right to break your agreements unless there's a good reason for it. My girl, the marriage contract is the most binding and sacred of all contracts. I want you to do your best to make this one a success."

There was the tinkle of the telephone bell. Mr. Bing put the receiver to his ear and spoke into the instrument as follows:

"Yes, she's here! I knew all the facts before she told me. Mr. Delane? He's on his way back to New York. Left on the six-ten. Charged me to present his regrets and farewells to you and Phyllis. I thought it best for him to know and to go. Yes, we're coming right home to dress. Mr. King will take Mr. Delane's place at the table. We'll make a clean breast of the whole business. Brace up and eat your crow with a smiling face. I'll make a little speech and present Mr. and Mrs. King to our friends at the end of it. Oh, now, cut out the sobbing and leave this unfinished business to me, and don't worry. We'll be home in three minutes."

CHAPTER EIGHT.

In Which Judge Crooker Delivers a Few Opinions.

The pride of Bingville had fallen in the dust! It had arisen and gone on with soiled garments and lowered head. It had suffered derision and defeat. It could never be the same again. Snead and Snodgrass recovered, in a degree, from their feeling of opulence. Snead had become polite, industrious and obliging. Snodgrass and others had lost heavily in stock speculation through the failure of a broker in Hazelwood. They went to work with a will and without the haughty independence which, for a time, had characterized their attitude. The spirit of the Little Shepherd had entered the hearts and home of Emanuel Baker and his wife. Pauline and the baby were there and being tenderly loved and cared for. But what humility had entered that home! Phyllis and her husband lived with her parents, Gordon having taken a humble place in the mill. He worked early and late. The Bings had made it hard for him, finding it difficult to overcome their resentment but he stood the gaff, as they say, and won the regard of J. Patterson, although Mrs. Bing could never forgive him.

In June, there had been public meetings in the town hall addressed by Judge Crooker and the Reverend Mr. Singleton. The judge had spoken of the grinding of the mills of God that was going on the world over.

"Our civilization has had its time of trial not yet ended," he began. "Its enemies have been busy in every city and village. Not only in the cities and villages of France and Belgium have they been busy, but in those of our own land. The Goths and Vandals have invaded Bingville. They have been destroying the things we loved. The false god is in our midst. Many here, within the sound of my voice, have a god suited to their own tastes and sins—an obedient, tractable, homeless god. It is my deliberate opinion that the dances and costumes and moving pictures we have seen in Bingville are doing more injury to civilization than all the guns of Germany. My friends, you can do nothing worse for my daughter than deprive her of her modesty and I would rather, far rather, see you slay my son than destroy his respect for law and virtue and decency.

"The jazz band is to me a sign of spiritual decay. It is a step toward the jungle. I hear it in the beating of the tom-tom. It is not music. It is the barbaric jump of sheer recklessness and daredevilism, and it is everywhere.

"Even in our economic life we are dancing to the jazz band with utter recklessness. American labor is being more and more absorbed in the manufacture of luxuries—embroidered frocks and elaborate millinery and limousines and the landaulets and rich upholstery and cord tires and golf courses and sporting goods and great country houses—so that there is not enough labor to provide the comforts and necessities of life.

"The tendency of all this is to put the stamp of luxury upon the commonest needs of man. The time seems to be near at hand when a boiled egg and a piece of buttered bread will be luxuries and a family of children an unspeakable extravagance. Let us face the facts. It is up to Vanity to moderate its demands upon the industry of man. What we need is more devotion to simple living and the general welfare. In plain old-fashioned English we need the religion and the simplicity of our fathers."

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Later, in June, a strike began in the big plant of J. Patterson Bing. The men demanded higher pay and shorter days. They were working under a contract but that did not seem to matter. In a fight with "scabs" and Pinkerton men they destroyed a part of the plant. Even the life of Mr. Bing was threatened! The summer was near its end when J. Patterson Bing and a committee of the labor union met in the office of Judge Crooker to submit their differences to that impartial magistrate for adjustment. The judge listened patiently and rendered his decision. It was accepted.

When the papers were signed, Mr. Bing rose and said, "Your honor, there's one thing that I want to say. I have spent most of my life in this town. I have built up a big business here and doubled the population. I have built comfortable homes for my laborers and taken an interest in the education of their children, and built a library where anyone could find the best books to read. I have built playgrounds for the children of the working people. If I have heard of any case of need, I have done my best to relieve it. I have always been ready to hear complaints and treat them fairly. My men have been generously paid and yet they have not hesitated to destroy my property and to use guns and knives and clubs and stones to prevent the plant from filling its contracts and to force their will upon me. How do you explain it? What have I done or failed to do that has caused this bitterness?"

"Mr. Bing, I am glad that you ask me that question," the old Judge began. "It gives me a chance to present to you, and to these men who work for you, a conviction which has grown out of impartial observation of your relations with each other.

"First, I want to say to you, Mr. Bing, that I regard you as a good citizen. Your genius and generosity have put this community under great obligation. Now, in heading toward the hidden cause of your complaint, I beg to ask you a question at the outset. Do you know that unfortunate son of the Widow Moran known as the Shepherd of the Birds?"

"I have heard much about him," Mr. Bing answered.

"Do you know him?"

"No. I have had letters from him acknowledging favors now and then, but I do not know him."

"We have hit at once the source of your trouble," the Judge went on. "The Shepherd is a representative person. He stands for the poor and the unfortunate in this village. You have never gone to see him because—well, probably it was because you feared that the look of him would distress you. The thing which would have helped and inspired and gladdened his heart more than anything else would have been the feel of your hand and a kind and cheering word and sympathetic counsel. Under those circumstances, I think I may say that it was your duty as a neighbor and a human being to go to see him. Now, he never needed money. In the kindest spirit I ask you if that money you sent to him in the best of good-will was not, in fact, a species of bribery? Were you not, indeed, seeking to buy immunity from a duty incumbent upon you as a neighbor and a human being?"

Mr. Bing answered quickly. "There are plenty of people who have nothing else to do but carry cheer and comfort to the unfortunate. I have other things to do."

"That, sir, does not relieve you of the liabilities of a neighbor and a human being in my view. If your business has turned you into a shaft or a cog-wheel, it has done you a great injustice. I fear that it has been your master—that it has practiced upon you a kind of despotism. You would better get along with less—far less business than suffer such a fate. I don't want to hurt you. We are looking for the cause of a certain result and I can help you only by being frank. With all your generosity you have never given your heart to this village. Some unkind people have gone so far as to say that you have no heart. You can not prove it with money that you do not miss. Money is good but it must be warmed with sympathy and some degree of sacrifice. Has it never occurred to you that the warm hand and the cheering word in season are more, vastly more, than money in the important matter of making good-will? Unconsciously, you have established a line and placed yourself on one side of it and the people on the other. Broadly speaking, you are capital and the rest are labor. Whereas, in fact, you are all working men. Some of the rest have come to regard you as their natural enemy. They ought to regard you as their natural friend. Two kinds of despotism have prevented it. First, there is the despotism of your business in making you a slave—so much of a slave that you haven't time to be human; second, there is the despotism of the labor union in discouraging individual excellence, in demanding equal pay for the faithful man and the slacker, and in denying the right of free men to labor when and where they will. All this is tyranny as gross and un-American as that of George the Third in trying to force his will upon the colonies. If America is to survive, we must set our faces against every form of tyranny. The remedy for all our trouble and bitterness is real democracy, which is nothing more or less than the love of men—the love of justice and fair play for each and all.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

"I Have Heard Much About Him," Mr. Bing Answered.

Never attempt to kill time unless you are satisfied it ought to be put out of its misery.

NOVEL AND SATISFACTORY PLAN BETWEEN LANDLORD AND TENANT

Fixed Wages Plus a Share in Profits Give Zest to Farm Work.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

"I took the same interest in my work as a tenant as I take in my own farm. I began work without a dollar and with very little knowledge of farming, but while I was on the farm I learned a good deal. I had ample opportunity to study the principles controlling crop growth, soil improvement, stock management, etc. The inspiration I received was valuable indeed, and during my period of service I earned enough money to buy the small farm on which I now live."

This extract from a statement made by a former farm tenant employee, now a farm owner, reviews a relationship between owner and tenant that a great many persons on both sides of the farm-landlord situation may well envy. There is possibly no subject connected with the business of farming which leads to as many misunderstandings, dissatisfactions and mutual losses as the management of a farm by a non-owner. Somebody has said that nothing short of application of the golden rule would ever bring about satisfactory arrangements between the owner and occupant of a farm, and yet, in this case, there was nothing extraordinary in the arrangement.

Tested by Fifteen Years' Trial.

The man who made the statement quoted above was for a number of years the manager of one of two ordinary sized hog farms owned by a man in Illinois, and the plan under which he was engaged as farm manager has been followed by the owner with almost unfailing success for more than fifteen years. Briefly, the plan was nothing more or less than a straight annual salary which included tenant house and the usual garden and poultry perquisites, and, as a bonus, a share of the net profits.

The profit-sharing plan has served to stimulate the efforts of the employee and has greatly lessened the supervision necessary on the part of the owner. By the use of the telephone and occasional visits he is able to keep in touch with the farm problems and to co-operate effectively with the manager. Since the owner was farming himself it was important that the management of his other two farms take as little of his time as possible. Thus far the managers have been selected from the men employed on the home farm, which serves as a training school.

How Net Income Is Determined.

The managers are given a regular monthly wage and a bonus consisting of one-third of the net farm income. In determining the net income 5 per cent interest on the valuation of the property is first taken out, as due return for capital, after which all expenses are deducted, such as for thrashing, the manager's wage, extra labor, machinery repairs, depreciation and the cost of fertilizers and seeds.

Each of the two managed farms has a house for the manager, who also can use the work horses to drive for personal use, has a garden, and a cow or two for supplying the family with milk and butter. Fifty chickens are furnished, and the family is permitted to raise as many as possible to supply the needs of the farm table, but on December 1 all the chickens above the original number must be sold, and the landlord gets one-half the receipts. The purpose of this limit on chickens is to enable the manager to have his own poultry supply without taking undue advantage of his opportunity.

In order to calculate the amount of money which the manager is to receive on this plan it is necessary to do a certain amount of bookkeeping. This is left to the owner, who keeps a set of farm accounts, and on March 1 a complete inventory is taken and a yearly summary of the farm business is completed. In cases of disease, poor crops, or a partial failure which is unavoidable, thus cutting down the income of the manager, the owner makes some allowance and gives the manager, in addition to the wages he has received, what he thinks is due him for the work he has done, and the responsibility he has assumed.

In the period before war inflation the managers made from $41 to $49 per month the year round, in addition to having their rent, garden, milk, butter and eggs. The manager of the smaller farm, comprising 96 acres, received $35 a month straight wages for four years up to 1918, and his bonus averaged $168 a year. The manager of the other farm, comprising 160 acres, formerly received $30 per month and was increased to $35.

Manager Well Paid.

When the fact is taken into consideration that the managers employed under this system are provided with houses in which to live and are given the privilege of raising their home supplies of vegetables, milk, poultry and eggs, it will be seen that their necessary expenses are inconsiderable, and it must be conceded that they are well paid for their services, in view of the fact that they have no investment risk. The length of time which the men remain on the farms shows that this method of employment must have been satisfactory both to employee and landlord in these cases. It should be pointed out, however, that the tenant should have absolute confidence in his landlord before he would be justified in working under this system.

TOMATOES ARE BEST IF RIGHTLY PRUNED

Fruit Is Larger, Cleaner and Superior in Flavor.

Grown in Home Garden Staking and Pruning Require Little Trouble and Will Fully Repay Trouble, Say Specialists.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

A thrifty tomato plant left to itself will spread over a space from 4 to 6 feet in diameter and will produce a peck or more of tomatoes. If staked and pruned it will yield about the same quantity of fruit, the tomatoes will be larger, cleaner, better flavored, and superior in every respect, and enough space can be conserved to accommodate five other plants cared for in a similar manner, say garden specialists of the United States Department of Agriculture. The staked and pruned plants are easily sprayed, and will continue to produce fruit later in the fall than plants which are allowed to spread naturally. As a rule, also, the pruned tomatoes will mature earlier. On the scale on which tomatoes are grown in the home garden, staking and pruning require little trouble, and will fully repay the effort.

When the plants begin making a vigorous growth, shoots will appear in the little pockets where each leaf joins the stem. Later the blossoms appear on the opposite side of the stem. In pruning the plant, remove all these side shoots and those around the base of the plant, being careful not to disturb the blossom clusters. The shoots, sometimes called suckers, should be pinched off shortly after they appear. The main stem can be carried to the full height of the stake, then allowed to hang over. By this time six or seven blossom clusters, on which the fruit is developing, should be set on the stem.

WOODLOT LIKE BANK

A woodlot should be treated as the principal in a savings bank. The annual growth of wood corresponds to compound interest. When you cut out more than the equivalent of the growth, you are drawing upon your principal.

SILO OF GREAT IMPORTANCE

Never Discarded When Properly Built and Filled With Corn at the Right Stage.

No silo which was properly built and filled with corn at the right stage of maturity has ever been discarded. Neither is there any farmer who has had a silo on his farm and used its succulent, nutritious feed that is willing to do without one.

CHEAP SEEDS ARE EXPENSIVE

Success of Garden May Be Jeopardized by Unwisely Trying to Save on This Item.

Cheap garden seeds are likely to prove expensive at any price. The cost of good seeds is relatively small and the success of the garden may be jeopardized by unwisely trying to save a few cents on this item.

The Builder.

Knicker—Is a full house tax exempt?

Backer—Not always; you have to give your wife a present if you lose.

Money is not the main thing. Knowing how to take care of it is of more importance.